THE REVENGE

—Graham Greene

THE

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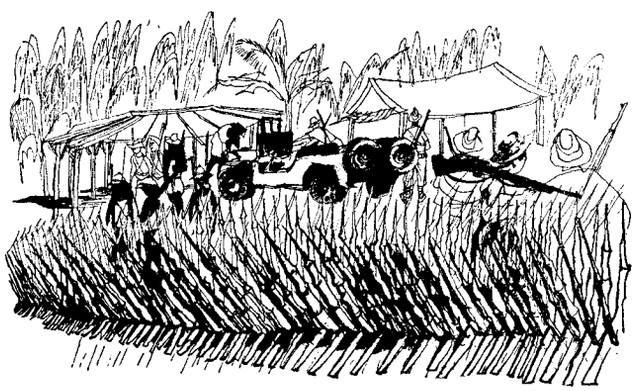

NEUTRALISM IN ASIA

by Shao Chuan Leng

OBITUARY FOR DISTRIBUTISM

by John Stanley

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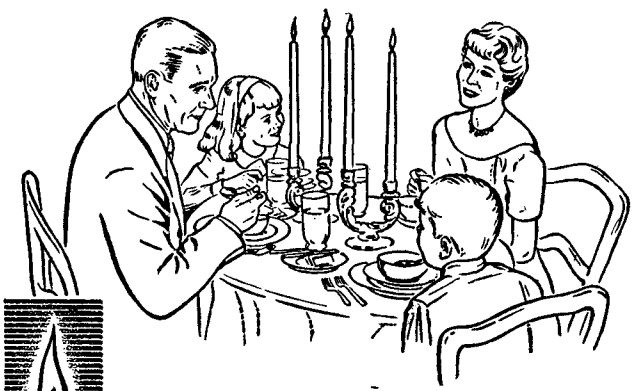

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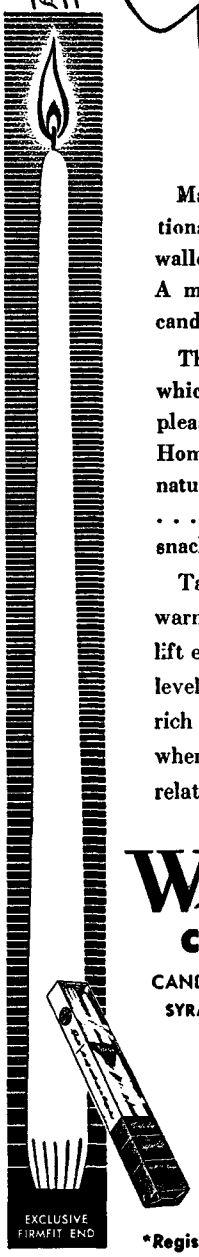

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THE
Commonweal
week by week

IN DEFENSE OF THE LIBERALS

IN an essay called "The Choice of Comrades" published in the winter issue of *Dissent*, Ignazio Silone testifies to the dilemma of modern man in search of political meaning. "The last forty years have witnessed the collapse of most of the great politico-social myths bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century," he writes. "As a result, certain kinds of people who had relied on these myths as a compass find themselves in a state of spiritual vagueness and ambiguity that is still far from being clarified. . . ."

What are "the great politico-social myths" that have collapsed, and who are the people who, as a result of the collapse, "find themselves in a state of spiritual vagueness and ambiguity"? The myths are undoubtedly the liberal myths, and the stranded people are obviously those whose world-view was predicated on them. For who today believes in the inevitability of progress? Who trusts in the perfectibility of man, refuses to recognize the problem of evil, or looks to social planning as the road to utopia? And who fails to share in the tragic sense of life? In all these areas the only "liberals" left could be those who have not read a newspaper for the past forty years, for the world's history since 1914 is a long and bloody rebuke to the liberal dream.

All this was argued by Russell Kirk in his article "The Dissolution of Liberalism," published in these pages last week. Mr. Kirk, in writing the obituary of ideological liberalism, calls for a rebirth of conservatism, a return to "a society of variety and tradition and veneration." He does not say specifically how this return is to be made, but it is clear he thinks the liberals will play no role in our recovery of value. The new-conservatism for which Mr. Kirk is a major spokesman dismisses the liberals, and all their works, along with the nineteenth century liberal dream.

It seems time, therefore, that someone should speak in the liberals' defense. They are today accused of everything from the loss of China to the creation of 1984. Their name is used in large sections of the press as a synonym for "naive," "fuzzy-minded" and "fool." Are they really discredited, and can any decent world be maintained without their help? We doubt it. To return to Silone's phrase, it is a question of the choice of comrades, of whom one wishes to fight beside, of whom one can trust. And here, we think, much can be said to the liberals' credit, whatever one thinks of their philosophical shortcomings, and much can be advanced against the record of those who now disparage them.

THE point is this: one does not choose one's politics by label, the way one might choose a suit. Silone quotes Simone Weil: "One must always be ready to change sides with justice, that fugitive from the winning camp." One is "liberal" or "conservative" as one sees justice now on the liberal, now on the conservative side, for in politics, one realizes, virtue is always elusive and no party can claim it exclusively. It does seem, however, that for most practical purposes American liberals have been better friends to justice during the past twenty years than have American conservatives.

To belabor liberals because their historic dream has ended is really to belabor nothing. Few men have believed in that dream for a long time now—including most liberals. It is easy to discredit something that is dead, and the myths of "progress" and human perfectibility have been quite thoroughly dead for some time now. What is difficult is to supply an adequate world-view to support those aspirations towards practical justice which liberalism has stood for.

In how many of the great practical struggles of the past twenty years would one wish to have opposed the "liberals"? In some struggles, obviously, yes, but in politics all one can do is weigh demerits against merits, and from the social legislation of the thirties on through the war against Hitler down to effective opposition to Soviet imperialism since 1947 it is, almost overwhelmingly, the "liberal"

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side a man can be proud to have been on. The record of American conservatism, on the other hand, on questions ranging from public housing to foreign aid, is not something of which the new-conservatives can boast. Conservatism has been, in recent decades, a largely negative force in American life, and in the support it has given to a radical demagogue like Senator McCarthy it has betrayed its own vocation.

It thus seems too early to think of American liberalism as discredited or dead. Its early dreams are finished, but that may prepare it for maturity. Until the new-conservatives can offer something better in its place, however, our task should be to redeem liberalism's works by supplying it with that adequate view of man and his destiny which it now lacks. For the myth may be ended, but the practical challenges remain—and for a long time to come they are likely to be challenges which only a "liberal" approach can adequately meet in a world that still seeks after justice.

AFRO-ASIAN CONFERENCE

SHOULD Americans necessarily view with dread the invitations to a late-April conference which have been issued by the Prime Ministers of the five Colombo Powers to thirty African and Asiatic countries? Unlike a number of Asian and African peoples, we tend to view all such developments primarily in the context of the cold war. There is understandable apprehension in Washington that Communist China will come to the conference determined to secure some sort of a neutralist agreement and certain of having hitherto unparalleled opportunities for propaganda.

The atmosphere should be particularly propitious for the Chinese leaders, as anti-colonialist (and therefore, unhappily, anti-Western) sentiments will be dominant. The Union of South Africa was not invited to the Indonesia conference because of its racial policies; Australia and New Zealand were also left out; Turkey was invited, but it is not known whether she will accept. Anti-colonialism is to comprise an important part of the agenda.

But aside from providing a temporary forum for Communist China, the April conference need accomplish little actually to advance the Communist cause. Anti-Western sentiments exist without it; they are already known and exchanged through normal press and diplomatic intercourse. There is a limit to what can be achieved merely by voicing them once more.

The decisive factors in America's relationships with these countries are much more basic. They stem from such matters as racial attitudes, self-determination, immigration barriers, trade policies (including the prices paid for Asian and African raw materials), credits and Point Four. Even technical assistance by itself is no sure-fire formula: witness the contention in Indonesia that American aid, which has enabled the islands to become self-sufficient in rice, was an effort to keep Indonesia economically backward so that she would not be able to compete in world markets with American industry.

The calling of regional and other conferences to which the United States is not a party is a sign of expanding political maturity that Americans should welcome. When the time comes our State Department must not fail to send out wholehearted wishes for success. Such an attitude, coupled with farseeing policies in the matters listed above, constitute our only chance of preventing an alienation of East and West long sought by Moscow and Peiping.

MARRIAGE IN SPAIN

SEPARATION of Church and State is a hallowed tradition in the United States. It is one we cherish, and the overwhelming majority of the American people, we think, both Catholic and non-Catholic, share this feeling. In the light of this fact, it is hardly surprising that the first reports on a proposed agreement on marriages involving Americans stationed in Spain should have aroused considerable controversy in the U.S. But we can-

NEXT WEEK

MARTIN TURNELL reviews *The Private Diaries of Stendahl*:

"Stendahl's main achievement was the creation of a new type which I have called the 'outsider' and which altered the perspective of European psychology, but there is a strong autobiographical element in the novels. Julien Sorel, Fabrice Del Dongo and Lucien Leuwen are all 'outsiders,' but they are also partial portraits of the artist seen at different moments in his career in different social settings. He regarded them with a mixture of irony and affection, but he endowed them with those gifts which life had refused him, and he enjoyed a vicarious satisfaction when they succeeded in enterprises in which he himself had come to grief."

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not join those who feel that the agreement being negotiated violates the Constitutional rights of the Americans involved.

We want to make our meaning quite clear. We can hardly be counted as enthusiasts for the union of Church and State, whether in Protestant or Catholic countries. In Norway, for instance, it is reported that American non-Lutheran servicemen have to get permission from a Lutheran pastor before marrying. Such a situation goes against the American grain, in our case, anyway. In Saudi Arabia it is said that Moslem leaders refuse to allow Christian marriages, and again this is just not the way we do things in America.

Here, we think, is the point. The world is not America. The Constitutional separation of Church and State which we take for granted in the United States is in many countries of the world not a fact; indeed, in many of them the whole idea is considered a monstrosity.

Spain, where we want air bases, has an almost completely Catholic population. There canon law on marriage and civil law on marriage are for all practical purposes identical, and to obey Spanish civil law in this area you must also obey canon law. The U.S. Constitution does not give Americans the right to violate the civil law of other countries, nor does it exempt potential Spanish brides-to-be, for example, from following the laws of Spain. We do not see how the legal, Constitutional privilege of the American to marry as he pleases, before priest, justice of the peace or minister, can be transferred to Spanish citizens subject to Spanish, not American, laws. Thus a Catholic girl in Spain who wishes to marry a non-Catholic American will be able to do so only if a Catholic marriage takes place; there is no other way for her.

Unfortunately, some Americans still want to have things both ways. Foreign troops being trained in this country have to abide by U.S. laws, and most Americans would be outraged at any suggestion that they should be exempt. This is the case even where the law is an abomination, as in the case of the laws in Southern States which would prohibit, say, a Spaniard training in this country from marrying a Negro if he chose.

For our part, we do not like the identification of canon and civil law in Spain any better than most other Americans. We would not want to see such a system in force in America—no more, we feel sure, than Lutheran pastors in this country want to have the role in the marriage of non-Lutherans that they have in Norway. But we know of no way in which the individual American soldier could carry extra-territorial status with him as he travels in various parts of the world. As far as we can see, American soldiers have to abide by the civil law in the countries where they are stationed, and this is just as true in Spain as it is in France, or England, or Saudi Arabia, or Norway, or anywhere else. And if incidents like the dispute on the Spanish agreement make Americans value their own system even more highly, that is all to the good.

GOOD APPOINTMENT

FOR many months after the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 went into effect, only a bare trickle of refugees made their way through the bureaucratic tangle surrounding the law. In recent months, the flow of people entering under the law has speeded up. But even here there has been serious doubt about its workings, because so many of those admitted under the law have been relatives of people already in this country and hence, in many cases, eligible for entry under other legislation. To many of our European friends, the workings of the Refugee Relief Act only helped to strengthen the impression that the United States had become something of a closed corporation, with the welcome mat out only for relatives and close friends of the early stockholders.

Because of such facts, news of the appointment of Edward Corsi as a special assistant to Secretary of State Dulles on refugee and migration problems is very welcome. Most recently New York State Industrial Commissioner, and at one time U.S. Immigration Commissioner on Ellis Island, Mr. Corsi has firsthand and sympathetic knowledge of immigration questions. Although he cannot himself reform a badly written law, he can be counted on to do his best to make it work as well as possible. And perhaps his presence inside the Administration will spur efforts, not only to revise the Refugee Act, but to take the badly needed new look at our entire immigration policy which we have long been promised.

FREEDOM IN YUGOSLAVIA

RECONCILING the irreconcilable has been the preoccupation of some Yugoslavs ever since that nation left the Cominform and announced that it intended to develop "true" Communism of an anti-Soviet variety. Yugoslavia has carried on relations with the West on a pragmatic basis of mutual self-interest: it profited by Western military assistance and the West profited by the addition of the tough, guerrilla-trained Yugoslav

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army to the European defense system and by the great propaganda wedge in the Communist front which was constituted by this heretic Communist nation.

But in domestic policy Yugoslavia has been torn between the orthodox Communist totalitarian system and the example of Western democracy. The training and background of the Yugoslav leaders has influenced them towards the former, but to many Yugoslavs the democratic system was a grave temptation. Other factors were also involved in the disagreement: a desire on the part of Tito's government to prove to the Cominform that Tito's Communism was the true faith, the better system; a fear that liberalization would be a confession to the East of theoretical bankruptcy; a fear of the consequences of liberalization on a nation where ethnic rivalries are bitter and the social basis for a national state is weak; a fear on the part of Tito and his men of losing power, that convenient power which can so easily be exercised by a loyal and energetic police force.

A year ago, Tito's band of Communist heretics found a heretic of their own in their midst: Milovan Djilas, a former president of the parliament and a member of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party. In a series of published statements, he called for a hastening of the process of democratization and an encouragement of that withering away of the Party machinery which presumably would mark a true Communist nation.

Mr. Djilas was thrown out of the Central Committee, was condemned by his associates, and for the past year has been living in obscurity. Late in December of 1954, however, a year after his expulsion from the Central Committee, he gave the New York *Times* an interview in which he repeated and expanded in forceful terms his views about the conflict between freedom and totalitarianism in Yugoslavia.

Involved in the affair with Djilas was Vladimir Dedijer, a wartime companion and personal friend of Tito's, and the author of a well-known biography of the Yugoslav dictator. He had expressed sympathy with Djilas a year ago, although in the end he voted against him in the Central Committee. He continued to associate with Djilas, and in December, while Marshal Tito was in India where he would not have to watch the bloodshed, Dedijer was called before a Party commission to be disciplined. He walked out on it and told his side of the story to the *Times* of London. (The London and New York papers figure so largely in this affair because the domestic press in Yugoslavia is, of course, rigidly controlled; Djilas and Dedijer have had to appeal not to the Yugoslav public but to the press and public of the outside world.)

Criminal action was brought against both men on charges of engaging in hostile propaganda. At this writing they are at liberty awaiting trial. The little flurry of liberal ideas is, for the time being at least, finished in Yugoslavia. Djilas and Dedijer represented no factions in government (poor Dedijer does not even seem to have got into this trouble out of concern for the principles involved; he was just a friend who hated to see Djilas get the works). As the two spoke only as individuals, their conviction will mean the end of the affair. The controlled press and the police can see to that.

The episode can be interpreted in several ways: a by-product of Tito's cautious reconciliation with Moscow and orthodox Communism, or an unwillingness on the part of old rulers to take a chance on new ideas, or a proof that Tito and his aides are willing to make non-essential concessions to liberal ideas if they can thereby look good to the West, but when the concessions near the organs of power will ruthlessly stamp them out. None of the interpretations is very flattering to Yugoslavia's leaders, nor very encouraging to those in the West who hoped for the granting of at least rudimentary democratic rights to the long suffering Yugoslavian people.

THE ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

THE campaign which The Commonweal launched last spring to raise its circulation level materially has now come to a conclusion. Many readers responded from the outset to the idea of securing new subscribers during the Thirtieth Anniversary year and of building up a more solid foundation for the magazine's future operations. Some took it upon themselves personally to enlist a number of new readers. Others contributed to raising the level by ordering gift subscriptions for friends or public and college libraries. Still others made outright contributions. Meanwhile a number of diocesan and other journals, religious and secular, warmly urged their own readers to take part. All in all The Commonweal secured 6,574 new long-term subscriptions in the course of the Anniversary campaign. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all those readers and well-wishers whose assistance and encouragement made possible so substantial an achievement. Their warm interest and generosity enable The Commonweal to set out on the new calendar year, and the first months of our thirty-first year of publication, with renewed hope for the future.

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Neutralism in Asia

IT IS A PART OF CHINA'S STRATEGY TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN THE ASIAN NEUTRALS AND THE UNITED STATES

SHAO CHUAN LENG

ONE of the most important forces in Asia is neutralism. As a sentiment it is quite widespread among non-Communist Asians; as a policy it has been noticeably adopted by countries of the so-called "neutral bloc": India, Burma, Indonesia, and Ceylon. There is no secret that the neutralist trend in this region poses a complex problem for American diplomacy and stands in the way of forming a common front against Communist aggression. The recent Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, signed at Manila, failed to acquire a broad Asian base mainly because of the opposition of the neutralist countries.

Four major factors are generally considered as contributing to the development of Asian neutralism. First, a strong conviction exists among many Asians that by acting as a sort of mediating force between the two power blocs they can help ease world tensions and preserve peace. Second, most of the countries in South and Southeast Asia are beset with enormous domestic problems; therefore they want to concentrate on internal development and avoid "entangling alliances" abroad. Third, the people of Asia, so recently freed from colonial rule, are still in their hearts suspicious of Western policies and motives. Fourth, a large number of Asians approach Communism with considerable optimism and believe that they can adopt its economic and social programs along with Western political democracy.

Aside from these four principal sources, Communist China stands as the single most influential factor in strengthening the neutralist tendency and in alienating free Asia from the United States. Consequently, it is in our interest that we should examine carefully how the neutrals feel about Communist China and what is Peking's policy toward Asian neutralism.

To begin with, it should be noted that all the neutralist countries in Asia have recognized the Communist government of China and have constantly urged its admission to the United Nations. They criticize the non-recognition policy of the United States as unrealistic and doomed to failure. According to their reasoning, Mao Tse-tung is in firm control of China, and the only practical course under the circumstances is to try to live with him. They believe that Communist China, with its strong nationalist tendency, can never become a satellite of Russia and therefore should not be isolated from the non-Communist world. A further argument often advanced is that nations simply cannot ignore a country having a quarter of the world population without suffering the consequences.

The attitude of the Asian neutralists toward Peking is undoubtedly also colored by their racial sentiment. They regard the rise of Communist China as the emergence of a great Asian power and take pride in the ability the Red Chinese showed in challenging the American power in Korea. While condemning the aggression of North Korea at the outset, the "Asian bloc" in the United Nations, led by India, nevertheless treated the later Chinese intervention quite differently. Rightly or wrongly, the feeling was that the sending of the U. S. Seventh Fleet to protect Formosa and, especially, the approach of the UN forces to the Yalu River, had much to do to provoke Peking into action. Throughout the crisis the members of the "Asian bloc" were more concerned with reaching a peaceful settlement than with punishing Communist China as an aggressor. They refused to join in public denunciation of the Communist germ-warfare charges against the United States even though they apparently knew that the charges were false.

Another aspect of their relations with Communist China is the unwillingness of the neutralists to run the risk of provoking their powerful neighbor. With China's overwhelming military might on their borders, India and Burma, in particular, do not want to do anything to offend China and sometimes have gone out of their way trying to keep friendly relations with it. New Delhi has settled the Tibetan question "satisfactorily" by signing a treaty with Peking which actually recognized the latter's complete domination over Tibet; Burma has set aside a general international practice by denying deserting Chinese Communist soldiers

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political asylum for fear of offending a "friendly" nation. To the neutralists' way of thinking, the greatest provocation they can make toward Peking is to have an alliance with the West; this they must avoid. They seem to believe that their security lies not in joining a defense setup like the Manila Pact but in reaching an understanding with Peking to guarantee peaceful coexistence.

These views are certainly not shared by the American people, and there is no denying the fact that the differences over China have increasingly strained the relationship between the United States and the Asian neutral bloc. In this connection, it seems appropriate to turn our attention to Red China's basic attitude toward neutralism and her tactical line with reference to the neutralists in Asia.

FIRST of all, it must be pointed out that since their victory on the mainland the Chinese Communists have openly assumed the leadership of the Communist movement in Asia. The combination of traditional interests and ideological conviction accounts for their enthusiasm to assume such a position. Writing *The Chinese Revolution and the Communist Party of China* in 1939, Mao Tse-tung had indicated his intention of restoring China's influence over such former tributaries as Korea, Burma, Bhutan, Nepal, and Indochina. In an opening speech before the Asian and Australasian Trade Union Conference at Peking in November 1949, Liu Shao-chi, the second strongman of Red China, laid down Communist strategy for all of Asia and told the delegates that "the path taken by the Chinese people in defeating imperialism and its lackeys and in founding the People's Republic of China is the path that should be taken by the peoples of the various colonial and semi-colonial countries in their fight for national independence and people's democracy."

Although there is no machinery formally called the Far Eastern Cominform, the Asian-Australasian Liaison Bureau of the World Federation of Trade Unions and the Peace Liaison Committee of the Asian and Pacific Regions, organized in Peking in 1949 and 1952 respectively, serve as useful channels through which the Chinese direct and coordinate the Communist activities throughout Asia. China's intervention in Korea, assistance to the Viet Minh and active role in the Free Thai movement are, of course, the more obvious evidence of Communist China's aspirations to lead and spread the "people's revolutions" beyond her boundaries to all the countries of Asia and the Pacific.

Like all true Marxist-Leninists, the Chinese Communists are fundamentally opposed to neutralism. They believe in the division of the world into two hostile camps and jibe at any efforts to take a middle course. Mao Tse-tung has said: "We oppose the illusion of a third road, not only in China but also on a world scale. One is either on the side of imperialism or on the side of socialism. Neutrality is a camouflage and no third road exists."

From the point of view of the Chinese Communists, the line of demarcation between the two camps is so clear and the struggle so fierce that if one does not join forces with the "peace" camp, one automatically commits the crime of siding with imperialism. Consequently, they have labeled all the non-Communist countries in Asia, including the neutralists, at one time or another as the "stooges of Anglo-American imperialism." The 1953 Rangoon Conference of Socialists, in which neutralism was the prevailing sentiment, was also abused by Peking as the Kwangming *Daily* warned: "The struggle of the Asian people against imperialist slavery will indeed not be lulled by demagogic resolutions of this gathering."

Dogmatic as her opposition to neutralism may be, Communist China is nonetheless realistic enough to appreciate the important position which the neutralist countries occupy in Asia and the advantage of being on good terms with them under the present conditions. Except for occasional blasts as cited above, Communist China has been cautious about unnecessarily antagonizing the neutralists. In fact, it is a part of China's over-all strategy to woo the friendship of the Asian neutrals and to drive a wedge between them and the West, particularly the United States.

In pro-American countries like Japan, the efforts of Peking are directed towards promoting a neutralist sentiment as an initial step to eliminate American influence. Toward the members of the "neutral bloc," Peking is trying the line of persuasion not only that they refuse cooperation with Washington but that they

take a further step in joining the "peace" camp. In pursuit of this tactical line, the Chinese propagandists have a variety of techniques at their disposal— techniques which include radio broadcasts, cheap books, pamphlets, newspapers, exchange missions, and the like. They also are skillfully concentrating their propaganda on such attractive themes as non-interference in internal affairs, world peace, Asian solidarity,

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American "imperialism," and the achievements of the "New China."

KNOWING well how other Asian nations feel about outside interference, Communist China has carefully maintained the appearance of not meddling in their internal affairs. She is anxious, at least

for the time being, to keep alive the "indigenous" nature of Communist revolutions in other parts of Asia and to avoid direct intervention whenever possible. This is particularly true in her relations with the neutralist countries.

Despite their proximity, for example, the Chinese Communists have not given open or substantial aid to the Burmese rebels; nor have they crossed the border on the pretext of attacking the Kuomintang forces inside Burma. When asked about China's intention for expansion by an Indonesian delegate attending the Asian Peace Conference in 1952, Chou En-lai promised that the Communist regime would disavow the traditional Chinese imperialism and refrain from any attempt to interfere with its neighbors. In his 1954 trip to India, the Chinese Premier again tried to assure his fellow Asians by stating: "The people of each nation should have the right to choose their own state system and way of life, without interference from other nations. Revolution cannot be exported; at the same time, outside interference with the common will expressed by the people of any nation should not be permitted."

In close connection with the principle of non-intervention, Chinese Communist propaganda uses peace as another favorable theme to attract the attention of the people in Asia. The peace campaign conducted by Red China is an integral part of the world-wide Communist peace offensive. Both the World Council of Peace and the Peace Liaison Committee of the Asian and Pacific Regions have served as the principal vehicles for Peking's propaganda.

"Peaceful co-existence," "halting the rearmament of Japan and Germany," "prohibition of nuclear weapons," and "conclusion of a Five Power Peace Pact" have been the standard slogans. The Chinese Communists' intervention in Korea was represented as a courageous act to resist "aggression" and safeguard the peace of the world. Their agreement to a Korean truce was hailed as a "convincing" proof of their sincere peaceful efforts to ease international tension. The Geneva Agreement also became a great triumph of the "peace" policy pursued by Communist China, Soviet Russia and their allies. The joint Chinese-Indian and joint Chinese-Burmese statements issued last June, in which pledges were made to observe the five principles of mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence, have been cited as a good example of international cooperation and a step toward establishing collective peace in Asia.

In order to appeal to the prevalent sentiment of the race-conscious Orient, the Chinese Communists have further made shrewd use of the theme of Asian solidarity. They pose as the defenders of Asia's freedom, stress their traditional friendship with other Asiatic countries, and advocate the familiar doctrine of "Asia for the Asians." The friendly gestures by the Chinese Communists toward fellow Asians range from sending food to India in 1951 to the recent repatriation of Japanese war prisoners. Their devices for promoting inter-Asian unity include the organization of friendship associations, convening of different conferences, development of trade relations, and exchange of cultural and good will missions. The Japanese people have been told by Peking that they can expect its support for their efforts to liberate themselves from foreign domination and to secure an independent and peaceful development. The neutralist nations, particularly India, have been praised for their contributions to the Korean and Indochina settlements and have been urged to cooperate with China more closely in the struggle for peace and freedom.

RED China's talk of Asian unity has an additional appeal when linked to anti-imperialism. Among all the "imperialist" powers, the United States is Peking's chief target. Communist propaganda repeatedly accuses Washington of plotting for world domination, turning Japan into a colony, and committing "aggressions" against China and Korea.

Currently, the Chinese propagandists are concentrating on two issues. They violently denounce the Manila Pact as an instrument of war, in order to discourage any neutralist country from joining it. They talk loudly about liberating Formosa in the hope of splitting the United States and various Asian nations over this ticklish question.

In their anti-America campaign, the Chinese Communists do not hesitate to use misrepresentation, dis-

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tortion, or fabrication to achieve their objective. At times, certain unfortunate American practices abroad, such as racial discrimination, association with undemocratic regimes abroad, and vacillation over colonial issues, have provided them with convenient propaganda material. In addition, Peking has taken every opportunity to exploit the differences between the United States and some Asian countries, especially the "neutral bloc." Unfavorable comments on America by Asians are often quoted in the Communist press, and any dispute between the United States and an Asian nation is always played up to the highest degree.

Finally, Communist propaganda tries to impress the Asian people with the achievements of the "New China." The main theme is that Red China, starting as a backward and impoverished country, has, during the past few years, made great strides of overcoming problems of poverty and ignorance, and is, therefore, the logical model for other Asian nations to follow.

Aside from spreading its success stories through ordinary channels like radio or printed material, Peking employs extensively conducted tours for foreign visitors as an effective means to serve its propaganda purpose. As a rule, foreign visitors or delegates from non-Communist countries are treated properly and are allowed to inspect some farms, factories, coal mines, textile mills, river development projects, and so on. Their tours, however, are so carefully arranged that they only can see what the regime wants to show them. Every step is taken to acquaint them with China's progress and to create an impression that there is no corruption, no unemployment, no beggars, no prostitutes, and even no flies in the "New China."

Favorable statements given by the visitors are often enlisted as evidence to substantiate Peking's claim of achievements. Moreover, the Chinese Communists can point to their "victory" in Korea, their great showing at Geneva, and their ability to export food abroad as testimonies to the strong and prosperous country China has become under Communism in such a short period of time. No doubt, the new Sino-Soviet agreement, in which Russia seemed to make most of the concessions, has further boosted Peking's prestige in Asia.

ALL these propaganda efforts are designed by Peking to win the friendship of free nations in Asia, particularly the neutralists, and to isolate them from the West so that they will be eventually drawn into the "peace" camp. In pursuing this policy of divide-and-rule, Communist China's tactics are extremely subtle and her slogans very appealing. As a result, she seems to be on more friendly terms with the neutralist countries than is the United States, and it is quite likely that she may conclude with them a series of non-aggression pacts as a counterpoise to the Manila Treaty. This, however, does not mean that she is already succeeding in swinging India, Burma, or Indonesia over to her side. There are still some underlying issues that stand in the way.

For one thing, politically, all the neutralist countries are committed to the democratic system of government and it will take more than propaganda to persuade them to change to totalitarianism. For another, it is exceedingly doubtful that ambitious and proud leaders like Nehru or U Nu would, if they can avoid it, accept Mao Tse-tung as the spokesman for Asia's millions. What is more, there is genuine fear and apprehension in South and Southeast Asia about China's ties with local Communist parties and her influence upon the large Chinese minority in this region. In the light of what Hitler and Stalin did to their neighbors, some thoughtful Asians are not assured merely by Peking's sugary words and flowery promises.

Just how relations will develop between Communist China and the Asian neutrals depends upon a number of things. Both Communist moves and American policy will undoubtedly have strong influence. The United States will only play into the hands of Peking if it takes too rigid a position and employs high-pressure techniques in her dealings with the neutralists. On the other hand, with a policy of patience, flexibility, and understanding, it can win more friends among free Asians that it has ever been able to.

Communist propaganda notwithstanding, the Americans and Asians do have a common basis for cordial cooperation. They will agree on such fundamental issues as peace, freedom, and democracy; their differences only exist in the methods to be employed toward those ends. Since toleration of differences and respect for others' opinions are the essence of a free society, there is no reason why the United States and Asian nations cannot work out a friendly relationship on this basis. It is up to the American people to take the initiative to convince free Asia, by words as well as by deeds, of their sincerity and to deflate the Communist claim that the hope of development and progress for Asian peoples lies in close collaboration with Peking.

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The Revenge

GRAHAM GREENE

WHEN I was a boy I must have read Q's novel *Foe-Farrell* three or even four times. It was a dramatic story of a man's revenge and I very much wanted an opportunity for dramatic revenge. As I remember the tale a political demagogue ruined the experiments of a great surgeon by inciting a mob to wreck his laboratory where it was believed that he was practicing vivisection. From that moment Foe (or was it Farrell?) pursued Farrell (or was it Foe?) across the world and through the years with the one object of revenge—I think he even found himself alone in an open boat on the Pacific with his enemy, improbable though this may seem. Then under the long drawn torture of the pursuit the characters changed: the pursued took on nobility, the pursuer the old vulgarity of his enemy. It was a very moral story, but I don't think it was the climax that interested me—simple revenge was what I wanted.

For there was a boy at my school called Carter who perfected during my thirteenth and fourteenth years a system of mental torture based on two aspects of my rather difficult situation—my father was headmaster and my elder brother head of my house. Carter had an adult imagination—he could conceive the conflict of loyalties, loyalties to my age group, loyalty to my father and brother. The sneering nicknames were inserted like splinters under the nails.

I think that in time I might have coped with Carter—there was an element of reluctant admiration, I think, on both sides. I admired his ruthlessness and in an odd way he admired what he wounded in me. Between the torturer and the tortured arises a kind of relationship—so long as the torture continues the torturer has failed, and he recognizes an equality in his victim. I never seriously in later years desired revenge on Carter. But Watson was another matter.

At that period of my life I had very few friends. I was isolated like a black-leg—"Old So-and-So's son." Watson was one of these friends and he deserted me for Carter. He had none of Carter's finesse—Carter continually tempted me with offers of friendship snatched away like a sweet, but leaving the impression that somewhere sometime the torture would end, while Watson imitated him only at a blundering unimaginative level. Alone he would have had no power to hurt. None the less it was on Watson that I swore revenge, for with his defection my isolation became almost complete.

For many years when I thought back on that period, I found the desire for revenge alive like a creature under a stone. The only change was that I looked under the stone less and less often. I began to write, and the past lost some of its power—I wrote it out of me. But still every few years a scent, a stretch of wall, a book in a shelf, a name in a newspaper, would remind me to lift the stone and see the creature move its head towards the light.

IN December 1951 I was in the shop of the Cold Storage Company in Kuala Lumpur buying whisky for Christmas which I was going to spend in Malacca. I had just got back from a three-day jungle patrol with the 2/7th Gurkha Rifles in Pahang, and I was feeling very tired of Malaya. A voice said, "You are Greene, aren't you?"

A foxy-faced man with a small moustache stood at my elbow.

I said, "Yes, I'm afraid . . ."

"My name's Watson."

"Watson?" It must have been a very long time since I had lifted the stone for the name at first meant nothing to me, nor the flushed colonial face.

"We were at school together, don't you remember. We used to go around with a chap called Carter. The three of us. Why, you used to help me and Carter with our Latin prep."

At one time, in the days when I still day-dreamed, I would imagine meeting Watson at a cocktail party and smacking his face in public. Nothing could have been more public than the Cold Storage Company of Kuala Lumpur during the Christmas rush, but all I could find to say was "I didn't think I was any good at Latin."

"Better than we were anyway."

I said "What are you doing now?"

"Customs and excise. Do you play polo?"

"No."

"Come along and see me play one evening."

"I'm just off to Malacca."

"When you get back. Talk over old times. What

Mr. Greene's play, "The Living Room," recently closed on Broadway. He is the author of The Heart of the Matter, The Power and the Glory, The End of the Affair, and other novels.

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inseparables we were—you and me and old Carter." It was obvious that his memory held quite a different impression to mine.

"What's happened to Carter?"

"He went into Cables and died."

I said "When I get back from Malacca . . ." and went thoughtfully out.

What an anti-climax the meeting had been. I wondered all the way back to my hotel whether I would ever have written a book if it had not been for Watson and the dead Carter, if those years of humiliation had not given me an excessive desire to prove that I was good at something, however long the effort might prove. Was that a reason to be grateful to Watson or the reverse? I remembered another ambition—to be a Consul in the Levant—I had got as far as sitting successfully for the *viva*. If it had not been for Watson. . . . So speculating, I felt Watson sliding out of mind, and when I came back from Malacca I had forgotten him.

Indeed it was only last week I remembered that I had never rung him up, hadn't watched him play polo, nor exchanged memories of the three inseparables. Perhaps, unconsciously, that was my revenge—to have forgotten him so easily. Now that I have raised the stone again, I know nothing lives beneath it.

"NOT INVALID, BUT IRRELEVANT"

Obituary for Distributism

JOHN STANLEY

THERE is a whole great literature of social thought extant principally in England and the United States which must be declared eclipsed. It is the literature created by Eric Gill and Harold Robbins and Chesterton and Belloc and Father McNabb and others interested in an anti-industrial agrarian movement. Most men, including their fellow Catholics, never accepted the premises and conclusions of these revolutionaries, but even the minority of those who did accept their principles, including the Southern Agrarians, and Peter Maurin, Ed Willock and others, were never able to show a way in which the principles could be put into practice. So, one submits, it should be formally declared that the arguments of this school of social thought are no longer pertinent to the situation. Those who believed for a time that the Distributists held the key to the solution of the social problem do not concede that their arguments, their solutions, are invalid; one simply says that they are irrelevant. The abundant writings of these courageous men will always be of historical interest, and will be of great value in gaining perspective, the nearer we get to 1984.

Most men must go along with what's going. It is one thing to take up arms against political tyrants, to burn chateaux, to storm citadels armed with valor and torches and pitch-forks, and it is another thing to lay siege to a totalitarian economy. Isolated individuals can make a gesture of protest—and this is good and praiseworthy—but it is becoming increasingly impossible for any really effective mass action to be taken.

For one thing, the people are relatively content with their servitude. They are enjoying the climate of Egypt and Babylon and don't want to go tramping through any desert wastes to a dubious fatherland promised by an assortment of prophets. For the average American, things are getting better and better: the cars become sleeker and more numerous, the deep freezers deeper, and TV is in color. We have more food than we know what to do with and less personal responsibility; twelve to sixteen years of "education" assure us that we are well on the road to Utopia—and might already have arrived if it hadn't been for the Communists. So, we are disposed to reject all invitations to take up Gandhian spinning wheels and walk; we can buy trylon and ride. Who can return to the village economy? There are—practically speaking—no villages left; there are only suburbs.

American Catholics—or Protestants, for that matter—are not returning to the land. The few who are on the land are going to the city, and in some cases the city is going to them. The phenomenon of our age is the mushrooming of suburban developments like Levittown. By 1965—a decade away—most Americans will be living under urban conditions. This is not the place to argue the faults or merits of these tremendous Autodelphias; it is only apposite to say that they represent the apotheosis of American life. Fresh air, a car-port and a split level ranch-type house do not the country make.

Our people have not gone back to the land; they

Mr. Stanley is associated with the Catholic Worker movement in New York.

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have come off the land. Between 1940 and 1950 the farm population declined by three million. And why should they stay on the land? What is there for them to do?

One pastor near St. Paul, Minnesota, has told of the decline of his parish: A generation ago a man with a family cultivated a quarter section of land (160 acres). He had a real farm: cash crop and kitchen garden and stock. The women baked and put things up for the winter and made clothes. And so forth; it is this plain, simple way of life which now sounds like an idyll.

Today, this same farmer is working a whole section (640 acres) with machinery and the aid of no other human beings. He very likely has neither kitchen garden nor chickens for his own consumption, and does his marketing at the local supermarket. If he has any children they go into town as soon as they have finished school—because there is nothing for them to do on the farm. There is no way for them to support themselves.

The machine is depopulating the countryside. This we know. Many small truck farmers are abandoning their farms because they cannot compete with the great plantations of the south and west; and they are getting construction jobs building super-highways and airfields. No property; no tools.

AS far as good work, and the developing of craftsmen and guildsmen are concerned, another facet of the Distributist-anti-industrialist-village dream, there is practically nothing left. Where the assembly line has left off, automation (factories without workers) has taken over.

Except for the artist, an epithet in Eric Gill's vocabulary, no one will be producing anything by hand very soon—anything of significance. Oh, there will be hobbies. A psychology professor of mine used to renovate old coffee tables. Men putter on the lawns in front of the split-level houses where everyone's picture window looks into everyone else's picture window. What they will do in their twenty-story housing projects God only knows.

One thing is sure; generally speaking, a man will not tire his body working when he can accomplish the same object without working. He's too practical; "never walk when you can ride, never stand when you can sit. . . ." It is useless to talk to him of the sacramentality of work, or something, or how his body should participate in the offering of creation to the Creator. Or how good it is to be physically tired. Why did God give men the brains to invent "labor-saving" devices if He did not intend them to be used?

Many Catholics active in the social field who have never accepted the Distributist ideal and solution. YCW chaplains have had no patience with the suggestion that factory work is either degrading or insignificant or undignified. And Canon Cardijn could show films of young European factory workers dancing in an immense ballet or pageant expressing themselves in their work in a huge Belgian sports stadium; the rhythm of this terrible spectacle was of the assembly line to which they expected to be bound for life. The Catholic "liberals" in the United States have, generally speaking, not accepted the Distributist solution. They like to speak of the importance of the Incarnation and becoming involved in what is going on here and now, and of the uselessness of utopian ideals and idylls.

Those who for a little while took seriously the hope that a solution to the problem of perpetual war and the machine and centralization and the money-mentality lay in a back-to-the-land-village-guild thing were always a small minority. But there was the hope that the monster could be slain by a group of leaders, strengthened by liturgy and craftsmanship and whole-wheat bread. Now it appears that we shall triumph only by being crushed.

It is hoped that somewhere, somehow, a few will hold out. One fears the fulfillment of Eric Gill's prophecy that Christianity would go down into the catacombs if we did not withdraw from "the system." Maybe that is what is necessary: the destruction of what is perhaps an overelaborate superstructure. But it still is almost unbearable to think of the best of our young men standing all their lives in toll booths collecting fifty-cent pieces or policing or accounting or going up and down up and down up and down in all those elevators.

So, what is to be done now? Now that all this "romantic agrarianism"—as the detractors have liked to call it—is pretty much of a dead letter, what is to be done? Who has a clue? Where are the radicals? Faced with automation and the H-bomb and the super-highway, who has a solution? A lot of people are drinking. Some people *must* be praying. A lot of people are traveling in Europe.

Actually, it seems that a purely spiritual solution is the only possible one at this time, for we have been robbed of matter. We have been robbed of our power to handle matter and work it. It seems that it is a time of withdrawal into the desert of our individual solution within our own spirit. It is a time for thought and study and prayer, because it is the time that has been chosen to show us once again that it is not on ourselves that we may depend for happiness, not even on a shiny, fast-moving scheme no matter how hygienic and pneumatic. It is a time for involvement and suffering and darkness and penance and meeting God.

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THE STAGE

APPEARANCE AND REALITY

IT is, so Lionel Trilling tells us in one of his essays, the classic theme: "the old opposition between . . . what really is and what merely seems . . . resistance to the clear claims of reality . . . seduction by mere appearance." To drama, the conflict is central, ranging from the nervous shocks of "The Bad Seed" to the sublime transmutations of "The Tempest." It may be explored on various levels: Mrs. Christie, for example, in "Witness for the Prosecution" (*at the Henry Miller*), has chosen to play the theme in an elementary register, which is her right, for criminal fiction is ruled at best by a benign deceit, and one gracefully withdraws the mind from larger considerations. Here appearance is the only reality, and the torpor of the dearly familiar invades us: smoky London afternoons and tea on the grate; wealthy maiden ladies most discreetly done to death, and the wigged Queen's Counsel declaiming under the vault of Old Bailey, while the prisoner stands rigid in the dock. Mrs. Christie's mixmaster has been here before, of course, with celebrated results: of the present occasion, I would merely note, with respectful awe, the tonic *fact* of a playwright audacious enough to call her work quite simply "a murder mystery," and sufficiently picturesque—in this day of noisy gossip—to ask of an audience honorable secrecy about its solution.

But the trickery: how well, this time, does it deceive? Almost: two acts of "Witness for the Prosecution" are built in Mrs. Christie's most absolute manner; the third falters badly under a weight of sudden shock that not even the grand old lady of murderers' row can quite sustain. You will remember Edmund Wilson's scoff of a decade ago: "Who cares who killed Roger Ackroyd?" A less ascetic reader would sternly rebuke him: *we* do. And there's the rub for the criminal fictionist: he must implicate and engage us humanly to set his little puzzle in motion, but at the last moment the rabbit still leaps out of the top hat, the smiling girl steps quite unblemished from beneath the circular saw, the ace is solidly in the hole. "It was just a trick," we murmur reproachfully, gathering up the crumpled handkerchiefs and bitten fingernails; "you were fooling us all along: it was only appearance after all, and here we were beginning to think it was reality!"

Mr. Robert Lewis' production of the melodrama is genial and untidy, well-upholstered but with a sweet disorder in the dress. Francis L. Sullivan, massively ceremonious, plies jowl upon jowl in a shameless guying of Mrs. Christie's barrister, but with a wonderful flavor of Dickens and Chancery. Patricia Jessel and Gene Lyons project the criminal puzzle into a dangerous climate of pathos and human feeling—Miss Jessel in particular brings off a splendid piece of hand-to-mouth surprise—while Una O'Connor contributes a beautifully finished portrait, witty and sagacious, of spiky Scottish recalcitrance. I should add that the play has made a great success, and that audiences are consuming Mrs. Christie's roast beef and Yorkshire pudding with genuine relish.

"MRS. Patterson" (*at the National*) is a play so rigorously shaped to the talent of its central personality—the entirely *sui generis* Miss Eartha Kitt—that it seems to have no objective dramatic existence. Yet here too, the playwrights—Charles Sebree and Greer Johnson—have arranged their portraiture on a slender fable of appearance vs. reality: in this case the fantastic transmutations of the latter within the mind of an adolescent Negro girl. The play makes an uneasy commerce between these two spheres: that of fact is colorless and aphasic, that of imagination quite without warmth or spontaneous impulse. What does tell is Enid Markey's deliciously bogus burlesque of Southern gentility; to Miss Kitt's plea for some small talk, Miss Markey replies: "How small, honey?" (Estelle Winwood has since assumed the role with, I am sure, no loss of pleasure.) And the costumes with which Raoul Pene du Bois has decorated the bizarre figures of Miss Kitt's imagination exquisitely distill all the pathetic bad taste of adolescence. Miss Kitt herself exploits her sulky feline personality with a ruthless tenacity: so many squeaks, purrs, growls I have not heard, nor seen so much arching, bristling, intrepid nervous energy. Miss Kitt might write authoritatively on "Cats I Have Known." Her exhibition is singular, commanding, yet monotonous—and quite nullified by the singer's post-curtain shift into the "mood indigo" of her major success.

MR. Sidney Kingsley's "Lunatics and Lovers" (*at the Broadhurst*) is all raw and garish surfaces, the dramatic equivalent of the magenta neon sign which shines relentlessly over this raffish cage in the moral zoo of Broadway. Mr. Kingsley, too, suggests that things are not as they seem: his doxies piously lust after respectability; his suburban hollow men desperately investigate the rich full life of the lower depths. I must confess that this play found me in a mood decidedly less than sanguine. The generous, comfortable bawdry to which it aspires never coalesces; the wit is as metallic and rasping as the chromium decor of the setting. And what *longueurs* of domestic platitude! Have Home and Marriage

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really so thoroughly had it that they must be quite so tediously defended? An alcoholic haze obscures the venality of the characters to whom Mr. Kingsley has given his heart, and indeed the whole play reeks sourly of a bad night on the town, with none of Scott Fitzgerald's awareness that at three o'clock in the morning, it is *always* the dark night of the soul. Mr. Kingsley, nothing if not ambitious, has privately invoked in support of "Lunatics and Lovers" the shades of Moliere and Rabelais, Schopenhauer and Shakespeare, but no such distinguished presences seemed to me to haunt the play: what I caught was the stale whiff of a herring from Damon Runyon's net, a little gamy from over-exposure among the cardboard guys and dolls of this particular asphalt jungle.

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

FROM HIGH NOON ON

THE new year starts with a bang; and if the two films reviewed this week set a standard, 1955 augurs well. "Bad Day at Black Rock" will remind you of "High Noon," which it resembles on several counts: it takes place in a very small southwestern town; it is a strong indictment of the townsfolk who don't seem to have any idea of the meaning of citizenship in a democracy; and its leading character, who is opposed to violence, nevertheless makes it clear that a man must stand up and fight when the time comes—and when the time comes this man stands up and puts the whole town to shame. But "Bad Day" is by no means a copy of "High Noon." It is not a western with lots of shooting and rough-riding cowboys. It is, on the surface, a tight and suspenseful melodrama.

Dore Schary's production of "Bad Day," with stunning photography in Eastman Color and CinemaScope and an outstanding cast, is excellent throughout; and John Sturges' direction of this cast is so good that you are never aware that these are actors being directed: they are the mean townsfolk living out Millar Kaufman's script—plus the one intruder, the outsider who makes them see the horror of the crime they had once committed. Spencer Tracy gives a masterful performance as the mysterious stranger who visits Black Rock for one day in 1945. Quietly and calmly he puts up with the insults and slurs of the citizens who resent and fear his intrusion. What is he here for? What will he find out when he rents a jeep from Anne Francis and goes out to Adobe Flat where the town's one Japanese-American lived four years ago? Finally comes the time when this one-armed, soft-spoken stranger speaks out and lets the town have the venom of his disgust and anger. The main recipient of his blast is Robert Ryan, the town dictator and bully. (It is amazing how a gentle man like Ryan can play a bully to perfection.) It would be wrong of me to detract from the suspense by telling what occurs during this one day at Black Rock. If I have any criticisms against the picture they are in reference to the too hasty solution and to the film's title. The bad day happened four years prior to the time of the film. The events of this day are really good. And good for you if you go to see them.

IN the short year and a half since the first appearance of CinemaScope we have become so accustomed to costume pictures and pageants spreading across the wide screen that we have become a little blasé about all this splendor. So I approached "The Silver Chalice" with no great expectations. Perhaps that is why I left it some two hours later weary but favorably impressed. Lesser Samuel's script of Costain's novel gets just a little too soap-operay when dwelling on the main love story of Deborra and Basil, but the picture as a whole has a nice sweep to it; and its sets are done in almost a modern theatrical style and are wonderful to behold in CinemaScope and Warnercolor.

The story concerns a young Greek, Basil (played by newcomer Paul Newman who resembles a younger Marlon Brando) who is hired by Saint Luke (Alexander Scourby) and Joseph of Arimathea (Walter Hampden) to design a silver chalice that will hold the cup used by Our Lord at the Last Supper. Basil's adventures as he goes from Jerusalem to Antioch to Rome are many and varied but are not without interest.

Perhaps because most of the people Basil encounters are so vivid, Pier Angeli seems rather colorless as the little home-body who loves him. She has difficulty competing with Virginia Mayo as the flashy beauty who assists Simon the Magician in his legerdemain. It is Simon who is the most fascinating character in the movie. At the first he's willing to admit he uses a bag of tricks to pull a fast one or two. But when he starts working to discredit both the Romans and Christians, he gets the idea that his magic is akin to miracles. He goes to Rome to show up Saint Peter, which results in his downfall. Jack Palance plays this role well. I'm not sure why the makers of "The Silver Chalice" felt their picture had to run so long, but if you can stick with it to the bitter end, you'll probably find that you'll have a good time.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

CAPITALISM

Cambridge, Mass.

TO the Editors: I have just read the curious article on capitalism [November 26] by John C. Cort. From it I gather that Mr. Cort wants to tell your audience that he thinks the current economic system in the United States should be opposed by Christians because *he* is against it. Is that an unfair conclusion? He is against it, and I quote him, "for the simple reason that the system is, all in all, more un-Christian than it is Christian." He does not explain why this is so in his opinion.

However, Mr. Cort does drop a few names and a few quotes and I am not quite sure from what he says whether or not he would have us believe that he is speaking or trying to speak for anybody more responsible than himself. He tells us, for example, that if we turn to the "Vatican" we get even more emphatic answers and he quotes Count della Torre, by which I presume he is attempting to indicate Count Giuseppe Dalla Torre. I would not mention this error if I did not think it is characteristic of the use of materials in this article by Mr. Cort. And I also wish to point out that if we look to the Vatican we look there not because the Count is there but because the Pope is there. But, of course, the Count is there also and has been for some time in his capacity as editor of the *Osservatore Romano,* which has been inside the Vatican City since the Lateran Pact.

Yet Count Dalla Torre has not always been in the Vatican since he was born in 1885, though he has been most active as a Catholic layman. Indeed, in 1919 he was president of Italian Catholic Action and that was an important year for it saw the founding of the first Catholic University (at Milan). As Mr. Cort may remember, the liberals in Italy closed the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome after the capture of that city, and they seized its buildings and its library, and the problem of establishing Catholic institutions of higher learning was a very real one from 1860 on. These liberals were the champions of capitalism as Italy was to know it at the end of the nineteenth century and Count Dalla Torre raised his voice against them. And it was against European liberalism that the Popes raised their voices too.

But capitalism in the United States has a different history and a very different record, though among its most powerful exponents there have been, and there are, persons whose concepts of social responsibility and religious life were similar to the concepts of the European liberals. Therefore, before we can draw any conclusions from the statement by the Count used by Mr. Cort, I think it is most important to know *when* the Count made it and, very importantly, in exactly what context he made it.

Perhaps the strangest part of the article informs us that there is some sort of a struggle going on between elements within the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, in which one group is clinging heroically to the social encyclicals while the other, made up of notorious reactionaries, would undo all the good work that has so far been achieved by their application. Further on, we are told, it seems that these heroic elements, as represented by one Paul Clarke, disagree with the Pope on such things as the question of the wage contract . . . and, Mr. Cort imparts, they seem to reject the Papal position on private property and expropriation. All of which leads me to ask: just who, in Mr. Cort's view, are the defenders of these encyclicals?

Mr. Cort also uses a quote from Bernard W. Dempsey which assails capitalism as "institutional usury by which the benefits of saving are swept to those who have not saved." This is a very puzzling pronouncement, for is it not those who have saved who have capital? And isn't the attack on capitalism based upon the theory that those with capital exploit those without it? Moreover, while it is true that the Christian analysis of capitalism lost itself in denunciations of usury for centuries, Father Heinrich Pesch, S. J., pointed out nearly fifty years ago that capital, *in the modern economy,* is productive just as other forms of property are productive, and that these higher forms of economic life that have developed as a result of man's continual endeavor to conquer nature have a valid utility when they are not misused. Of course, Karl Marx did take a look at Rothschild's capitalist power in France and tell the world that all men would be better off if *nobody* had any private property interests in productive wealth, but the Roman Pontiffs have never agreed with him. On the contrary, they have said, "Everybody a property owner!" Furthermore, capitalism, especially in the United States, has developed a great deal since 1830 and 1848. For anybody to tell us to throw it overboard at this late date seems a little like having a friend of ours counseling us not to buy a plane ticket to Paris because the Wright Brothers plane *will* never make it.

Indeed, the capitalist system as we know it in the United States is the great miracle of economic life in this age and it is *not* anti-Christian, though it does have very distinct non-Christian features. Religious life flourishes without compulsion and the working man enjoys a higher standard of living than in any other society. It is true that there are defects and that there is unemployment. But it is not the unemployment of the proletariat of 1830. And we have not "solved" the unemployment problem by mass slave labor, as

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in the Soviet Union. And these United States, with all their faults, are the hope of mankind in the battle against poverty and in the crusade against slavery the world around. For these and many other reasons, therefore, I cannot concur with Mr. Cort when he tells us that "our system" is more unChristian than it is Christian, and I hope the Editors of The Commonweal agree.

WILLIAM E. W. GOWEN.

E. E. CUMMINGS

Notre Dame, Ind.

TO the Editors: Is there any serious argument against considering E. E. Cummings one of the half dozen finest poets alive in this country of 160,000,000 people? (With, maybe, Pound, Auden, Stevens, Moore, Williams, Frost.) If there is any such argument, I don't know it, outside of Blackmur's essay of twenty years ago which did not, of course, treat anything beyond Cummings' earliest work.

Critics as fine as Horace Gregory and Theodore Spencer do not hesitate to consider Cummings among the greatest lyricists who have ever used our language. Now if they are anywhere near right, Michael Harrington's treatment of Cummings [Dec. 10], with its pale appeal to the much-thumbed orthodoxies of the Eliot criticism, in order to damn with faint praise, is not adequate to the event of the collection of this master's poems.

Mr. Harrington informs us, "The fact that the traditional form is arranged for the eye and expressed in the vocabulary of the twentieth century is more or less irrelevant to the poetry's main impact." How far critic Harrington comes under the "main impact" of Cummings perhaps shows in his final remarks where he says that in Cummings' best poems, one discerns "Behind the contemporary style, the shapes of familiar cities." Now in all seriousness, and candidly, who goes to Cummings (or to any art for that matter) to look at familiar cities! This is what I mean by damning with faint praise. And if Mr. Harrington were right, that this is Cummings at his best, that this is "pure poetry" as he calls it, then "most people" are quite right in ignoring modern verse. For who would go to all the trouble it takes to read these people in hopes he might see something he has already seen?

Mr. Harrington is at pains to point out that the "central fact" about Cummings is "not the Joycean sense of language." Perhaps not, but one cannot go far amiss in evaluating the goodness of Cummings as a poet if he looks to the *Cummings sense of language* for the central facts. Mr. Harrington concedes that Cummings' interest in the placing of a word on the page is "a serious technique." The fact is, the word placing is a part of the poet's language. Let me explain: As Theodore Spencer has pointed out Cummings is concerned about the time element in speech which belies the simultaneity, or alternately the different temporal rhythm, of experience. (Where "experience," taken deeply enough, is thought of as the material for poetry.) And although Cummings' interest in the appearance of the poem on the page is related to his second profession as a painter, it is more essentially related to his integrity as poet: for the *appearance* is not the point, as it could not be for a poet—Christmas poems in the shape of Christmas trees, etc., notwithstanding. It is the *language* that is the point: these techniques of punctuation, word-breaking, and -placing are means of resisting the "necessity," of spoken language, with its falsification of experience; they are means of controlling the reading of the poem, hence means of controlling the poem's language, in such a way that it is truer to the vision of the poet.

There is thus a deeper reading of Eliot by which Cummings could indeed be seen at his queerest, or most individual, to be most traditional; for the exorcizing of the temporal necessity of spoken language, in order to make a lyric poem, is a traditional problem. Rhythmic techniques and other means of rhythmic control are all attempts to solve it. And the short lyric of the kind Cummings almost always writes—taking only a single page where it is framed entire with white space and is encompassable in a single span of the intellect, has an advantage for rendering the simultaneity of the poet's experience that the longer poem cannot approach, though the longer poem has other means—hypnotic and arrestive usages, stanzafication, refrain, etc. (besides, the longer poem may not be attempting the *lyric* activity of poetry; for epic, this temporal lag inherent in speech is usable, and it is other necessities than this one which must be exorcized).

Still, I suggest that it is more true to say Cummings is traditional because he is good than to say he is good because he is traditional. This is the other side of the dilemma of tradition and the individual talent, which Eliot treats, and the side I think which bears most relevance to Cummings. At any rate, before we agree with Mr. Harrington that Cummings is "if he is a revolutionary . . . a conservative one," and once again prove Mr. Eliot right, we had best wait until Cummings' technique is better understood. And it seems to me that it should be a prime function of competent criticism to help us to that understanding.

And in this latter connection, let me say I was sorry to find Mr. Harrington pleading for a selected Cummings rather than a collected. Are the critics ready now to leave it to others to have their selections made for them? If so, then it is in the name of the

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non-critic that I express my happiness with this "collection."

Mr. Harrington scolds Cummings for his "interminable poems about prostitutes" and his "arrogance," among other things. On the score of the former, let me ask why the uncritical word "interminable"? And why list such poems in a paragraph whose lead sentence is concerned with the "dangers of lyricism." If interminable poems about prostitutes are really one of the dangers of lyricism, it is a peril whose imminence ought to be shown more clearly. What one would have wished for at this point is an assessment of the role of the prostitute-image in Cummings' art, a placing with respect to the tradition, even (since that is Mr. Harrington's interest here), from Lucian to Baudelaire and Rouault—where these unfortunate ladies have been a subject of serious art.

So far as Cummings' "arrogance" is concerned, what is more arrogant than the passing of judgment upon "arrogance" with no attempt to assess the meaning of it in Cummings' art, where, I take it, Mr. Harrington got the idea. Instead of scolding Cummings for distinguishing (in a preface) between "most people" and "you and I" it seems to me that Mr. Harrington and I should be flattered by the inclusion of the "you."

JOHN LOGAN.

BOOKS

Ten Who Would Have Changed America

AMERICAN DEMAGOGUES: TWENTIETH CENTURY. By Reinhard H. Luthin. Beacon. $5.

By WILL HERBERG

THE demagogue, like the word we use to designate him, seems to have originated in Greece. Demagoguery obviously requires some measure of free public life, and the Greek city-state was apparently the first political system in the ancient world that allowed sufficient room for its practice. By the same token, demagoguery has flourished in the United States, the first large-scale democracy in history. Reinhard H. Luthin undertakes, in this volume, a study of the American demagogue by telling the stories of ten such "masters of the masses" who made their mark in the first half of the present century. The stories are instructive, vividly told, and amply documented, and Mr. Luthin presents them in the context of the social and political conditions out of which the demagogues emerged and in which they operated.

The ten demagogues he deals with are James M. Curley of Boston, Theodore G. ("The Man") Bilbo of Mississippi, William Hale ("Big Bill") Thompson of Chicago, William H. ("Alfalfa Bill") Murray of Oklahoma, Frank Hague of Jersey City, Mr. and Mrs. James E. ("Pa" and "Ma") Ferguson of Texas, Eugene Talmadge of Georgia, Vito Marcantonio of New York, Huey P. Long of Louisiana, and Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin. The accounts of these men are set against a background of Populism and LaFollette "Progressivism," which, as Mr. Luthin clearly sees, were themselves very largely demagogic movements despite their liberal programs and achievements. It is one of the great merits of Mr. Luthin's work that he has no anti-liberal ax to grind or liberal "sacred cows" to protect; he is therefore able to present his material with a fair degree of freedom and objectivity and to draw the conclusions warranted by his analysis.

Mr. Luthin defines the demagogue as a "professional man of the people," a "rabble-rouser," who disregards law and constitutional procedures in his direct appeal to the masses for power to protect their "interests" for them. The demagogue knows how to exploit the social and economic grievances of the masses, their sectional resentments, their cultural inferiorities, their ethnic and religious prejudices, their moral indignations; and he knows how to direct them all against The Enemy, traditionally defined as the "upper crust," the "interests," "Wall Street," the "economic royalists."

Frequently, especially in the earlier phase of his career, the demagogue enjoys the support of responsible elements in the community, who see in him the champion of many worthy causes and the enemy of selfish vested interests and entrenched corruption in government. And, indeed, the demagogue frequently does accomplish constructive work — "The Man" Bilbo, for example, as Mr. Luthin points out, gave Mississippi the best administration in its history from the point of view of "forward-looking legislation"—but in the end it becomes clear that his constructive work is merely incidental, however sincerely intended; what he is really out for is to subvert the foundations of constitutional government by accumulating unrestricted and irresponsible power in his own hands to use as he sees fit.

In every demagogue, there is the potential totalitarian; given the appropriate historical conditions, the potential may become actual, and the demagogic mass leader, impatient of constitutional restraints that frustrate the "will of the people," is transformed into the totalitarian despot in whom the popular will is incarnated. This dialectic process by which mass democracy turns into totalitarian dictatorship was already outlined by Plato and Aristotle; all modern history bears witness to it, and Mr. Luthin's narratives document it on the small scale of American local and regional politics.

In the United States, fortunately, the historical conditions for the fulfillment of the logic of demagoguery have never existed to any substantial degree in the country as a

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whole; as a result demagogic movements, even so widespread as Populism, have always been limited, and in the end, frustrated by the stabilizing forces of American life. Unlike Great Britain, where representative government emerged in the eighteenth century under conditions of aristocratic politics restricted to a narrow segment of the population, representative government in this country came into being almost simultaneously with mass democracy; from the time of Jackson, at least, politicians have been almost compelled to play to the masses and take on the role of rabble-rousers. Demagoguery has therefore flourished in this country as nowhere else, but since the American social and economic system has, by and large, satisfied the needs and desires of the people, no mass "proletariat" alienated from society and embittered by sudden deprivation has ever appeared on a nation-wide scale. The demagogues have, therefore, been forced to confine their operations to limited areas where special conditions—such as ethnic and cultural tensions in the big cities, rural depression and racial hatreds in certain sections of the South—have provided them with inflammable material for their harangues. Even Huey Long, who alone of all the characters dealt with in this volume, ever got beyond his particular city or state, meant very little outside of a fairly well-defined region in the South and Southwest. The only exception is Senator McCarthy, and this exception is perhaps more instructive for us today than the standard type of demagogue.

It is curious how dated Mr. Luthin's demagogues strike one as being. (Two of them, incidentally, do not really belong in his gallery at all—Frank Hague was no demagogue, but a regular big-city machine politician, while Vito Marcantonio, who knew and used all the demagogue's tricks, played a game far more sinister.) The demagogues Mr. Luthin displays seem to belong to a long past age, the age of Populism, Tom Watson, William Jennings Bryan, and "Old Bob" LaFollette. The battles they fought, the causes they championed, the slogans they proclaimed, seem all so *old-fashioned,* even where (as in Georgia) something of the old bluster still remains. They seem to be specimens of an earlier day, faded photographs in the album of American history. All but Senator McCarthy.

But then Mr. McCarthy does not fit the picture of the demagogue as that emerges from Mr. Luthin's particular descriptions as well as from his concluding chapter, "The Mark of the Demagogue." The demagogue, according to Mr. Luthin, "exploits racial and religious rivalries," "stirs up sectional and class antagonisms," champions the "plain people," denounces "Wall Street" and the "interests," advances irresponsible programs of social and economic betterment, and makes the most reckless and extravagant promises. But Senator McCarthy denounces no "interests," has no programs of reform, makes no promises of social utopia, carefully avoids racial and religious irritations, and is so little the folksy "man of the people" that Mr. Luthin can think of nothing better to produce as evidence than the fact that "in his Wisconsin campaign McCarthy praised the pie-baking of the farmers' wives and joked with the men in the corner stores." And McCarthy has, or has had, a national appeal beyond what any other demagogue listed in this book could boast of. McCarthy's influence, whatever may be its size and scope, is neither specifically rural nor specifically urban; it is not limited to one class or region, and although it seems particularly strong among certain ethnic groups, it is not by any means restricted to these. Mr. Luthin is aware that Joe McCarthy does not quite fit into his picture, but he does not make any serious effort to discover why (his chapter on McCarthy is by far the weakest), and this failure, with what it implies, is perhaps the most serious shortcoming of the book.

For though Senator McCarthy is indubitably a demagogue, he is a demagogue of a new type, who operates in a new context of American life. He is a demagogue because he is a rabble-rouser, constantly at work stirring up the masses against the "higher-ups," the "men on top," who are represented as responsible for all the evils that afflict them. He is a demagogue because he is forever calling on the masses to "demand action," to "take things into their own hands," without regard to the proper operations of constitutional government upon which political freedom and order depend. But his appeal is not sectional or regional; nor is it an economic-class appeal. The "malefactors" from whom Joe McCarthy wants to save the people are not "malefactors of great wealth," not "Wall Street," or the "interests;" they are the men in the federal government who are allegedly "soft" on Communism, who imperil the security of the nation by their laxity or worse in dealing with Soviet espionage and subversion.

This drastic shift of emphasis from economic betterment to national security is hardly accidental; in part at least, it reflects the fact that mid-twentieth century America is deeply disturbed not so much over economic conditions (the nation was never so prosperous) as over the Soviet Communist threat to our very existence. Senator McCarthy is the expression of these fears and anxieties, and knows how to exploit them. Because the resentments and frustrations engendered out of these anxieties are not limited to any particular section of the country or segment of the population, McCarthy's appeal is national to a degree new in the history of American demagoguery; McCarthy, moreover, is able to make use of the new mass media of communication, whereas earlier demagogues were largely confined by the reach of their voice and the limitations of physical mobility.

Whatever may be the fate of Joe McCarthy himself, his type of demagoguery, rather than that represented by "Big Bill" Thompson or Huey Long, is likely to become the problem we will have to deal with in the immediate future. Perhaps Mr. Luthin could make this type of demagogue the subject of study in a future work.

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Initiation into Defeat

OUT WENT THE CANDLE. By Harvey Swados. Viking. $3.95.

By PATRICK F. QUINN

FIRST novels, as a rule, are autobiographies in disguise, and perhaps friends of Harvey Swados will be able to identify the fragments of his career and personality that are strewn piecemeal among the younger people in this book. But Mr. Swados has not chosen to write primarily about himself; nor has he chosen as the theme of his first novel the usual one of initiation-into-life, a theme all but compulsory for a young writer venturing on his first long work in fiction. Herman Felton, the central character of the book and the best thing in it, is a man senior by at least twenty years to Mr. Swados. His initiation is not into life but defeat. During the war years he builds his small dry goods business into a financial empire of major dimensions. The power he accumulates can do nothing, however, to alter the emotional dislocations of his two grown children. All of his efforts are made for their sakes; and yet they become, in different ways, increasingly estranged from him. So he is pretty well smashed up at the end, and his dim awareness of what caused his downfall comes too late to do him any good. When his candle goes out he is left darkling.

We are not. So well is his story told, so perceptively, that is, has Mr. Swados imagined this man and devised means to place him fully before us, that we put the book down with something like a sense of knowledge. In his simplicity and complexity Herman Felton comes through to us, not just as one more character in one more novel, but as a human being, admirable, pitiable, and above all, understood. This is the old magic we keep looking for in fiction and so seldom come upon.

In some other respects, unfortunately, Mr. Swados is only the bungling sorcerer's apprentice, operating on the reckless principle that if the recipe calls for a pinch he will get better results by tossing in a whole canister. The results are not better, only noisy and noisome. Betsy Felton, Herman's precocious and very problematic daughter, is sadly out of whack in many ways, chiefly sexual. And logically or psychologically, this makes sense. But Mr. Swados seems unduly worried that we won't get this point—*really* get it. So in a number of scenes he brings this particular brew to a steamy boil. In fact it boils over and becomes quite a mess. The blurb-writer at Viking, an old hand, evidently, must have had this sort of thing in mind when he decided to say something about the "intransigent honesty" of the book. But such intransigence may be merely gratuitous. And it may be just as naive as honest to assume, in effect, that the academic cliché "stuff of life" is at bottom equivalent to the slang phrase "hot stuff."

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It is unlikely that so crude an equation is consciously assumed by Mr. Swados. He surely has a more sophisticated rationale for what he is doing, and I wish I could dig it out. I also wish I could see why he has studded the book with so many coincidences. Over and over again various minor characters in the story play their parts, walk offstage, and we think we have done with them. Then, much later, they unexpectedly turn up again in a new situation and do extra duty. It almost seems as if Mr. Swados were resolved to get as much work out of these people as he possibly can. There must be some defensible aesthetic theory behind all this, but what is it?

These, it seems to me, are the two main difficulties that a reader of this book will run into. It would be a better book without them, or if they were not so insistently in evidence. For they distract attention from the several merits the novel has: its expertly managed, unfussy prose, the variety and credibility of its many different settings, the compassionate insight with which its central figure is both presented and judged.

Roots of Faith

FAITH AND FREEDOM. By Barbara Ward. Norton. $3.75.

By T. E. CASSIDY

BARBARA Ward has established herself as a brilliant analyst of the West's problems. Her earlier works, *The West at Bay* and *Policy for the West,* are forceful and sometimes dazzling arguments for Western political and economic unity in face of the threat of world Communism. In her new book, *Faith and Freedom,* Miss Ward lucidly carries through an examination of the forces that made the West great spiritually, and she offers some suggestions about the revitalization of those forces necessary to sustain us in the moral crises of our time.

There is no doubt that this is an important book. More than that, it is a powerful reminder that all is not measurable in terms of military or economic or political preparedness if we are to even begin to resolve our dilemmas. It tells us that we must, with no shortcuts or haphazard watering-down, return seriously and solidly to the sources of our strength: the great civilizing and spiritualizing ideas, both God-given and man-thought, that made our Western world great.

This is no light theme, but, happily, Barbara Ward is a serious writer who can, with ease and understanding, reach any reader who has at least some sense of the continuity of Western thought and history.

The major achievement of our Western civilization, Miss Ward recalls, has been the idea and the fact of freedom, and both idea and fact are rooted in the Word Made Flesh. Man's freedom in the West has been oriented on a dual level, the natural and the supernatural. To rip out the roots of faith is the final death agony of freedom. And we have come perilously close to that in our era. The current power and might of the West are almost solely based on a theory, almost a mystique, of economic, military, and politico-bloc strength and majesty.

Miss Ward points out: "Communism . . . . will not be defeated if the Western world tries to counter it by falling back on the uncontrolled vitalities of our age." Indeed, these vitalities are too often only the vitalities of the saber-rattle, now translatable as the hydrogen bomb. It is no surprise that statesmen throw out threats of super-retaliations, because too much of our thinking is done in terms of Superman, or his replacement, Superbomb.

There is a realistic approach in this book to the problem of evaluating the why, when, and wherefore of the spread, not only of Communism as a political and military force, but also of Marxist theory, as a dynamic and oftimes dominant human force. The West's failures were pointedly exploited by Marx and his followers. Economic

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nationalism, private capitalism, and the origin of both in the institution of private property—these are the things that Marxism attacked, and they still have persistent weaknesses in Western society. What success the West has had in the correction of its own mistakes, especially in the great industrial democracies, has been largely overlooked abroad.

The most compelling of all the answers to the myth of Marxism is the West's capacity for self-reform. Miss Ward writes: "Nothing illustrates more starkly the force of myths than the way in which men of the Left in Europe have ignored the transformation that has come about in American industrial society. Wedded as they are to their belief that the United States is an advanced case of monopoly capitalism, they have, it seems, taken few opportunities to study, scientifically and objectively, the concrete facts of the American economic system. The transformation of labor-management relations, the growth of bonus, productivity, and profit-sharing schemes, the experiments in industrial self-government and even private collective ownership—all these are virtually unknown outside America. Yet added together, they amount to something very close to a revolution."

There are many challenging sections in this book, but above all, the whole is an affirmation of the faith that made us great in our freedom. We may have lost much ground in the war of ideas, but freedom's foundations have not yet been destroyed. The West will triumph, but only if Western man realizes his responsibilities and roots. Miss Ward can think and she can write. This is a book to restore our values.

Scenario

THE MESSENGER. By Rémy. Translated by Viola Garvin. Newman. $2.50.

BY ANNE FREMANTLE

TO assume that the Nazi and the Communist are the same thing

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under different names is as naive as is the parallel assumption (oh so often made by the same people) that the confessional and the psychiatrist's couch are horizontal and vertical expressions of the same human need. Colonel Gilbert Leon Rénault, whose pen-name is Rémy, was a former key member of the French Resistance and has written a gripping first novel, well-organized, suspenseful. But it rings fundamentally false because he describes the terror he only can guess at, in terms of the terror with which, for four years, he gallantly fought. The Nazis, for all their holocausts, were simple-minded Elizabethans compared with the Communists. They tortured the body; when a man broke sufficiently to betray, they thought themselves victorious, and finished him off, sadistically interested only in making the agony endure as long as it could, and then perhaps in scavenging what was left, gold teeth, skin for lampshades.

Rémy's hero is a young priest—the first scene is pre-ordination, in Rome—sent behind the Iron Curtain to Rumania. His first stop is Hungary, where he is housed by a wonderful old lady, plucky, resourceful, who manages to pass him on, towards Galicia. He is caught, with the connivance of a high-up of the regime, who was once a Catholic priest. It is here the novel fails: it could have been, perhaps, another *Darkness at Noon,* but the apostate priest, who is so clearly caricatured in black and white, should have been a mood painting of every shade and fold of gray. Instead everyone shouts; the apostate storms and rages, whether pitifully or horribly, and Father Gérard argues patiently, like some young Gospeller on a soapbox at Hyde Park Corner.

The central scene, where the apostate is face to face with the Eucharist, and the devil uses his mistress' voice, fails as a novel because too much is said—the reader's participation is never invoked, he can take it or leave it, but he is not communicated with. Yet for this very reason, this bad novel would make a superb movie, especially if made by J. Arthur Rank, with Tyrone Power or Marlon Brando as Father Gérard.

So far, only Franz Kafka, George Orwell and Arthur Koestler have succeeded in rendering in fiction any part of the interior life, the "what makes Sammy run" of the Communist. But Rémy at least writes an exciting scenario, and his good characters are lovable and real.

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